

Essay-Wettbewerb: Zukunftsuniversität 2030

by Dr. med. Konstantinos Michailidis

The University of Freiburg is a modern high learning institution based on a rich historical tradition. Since its founding in the late medieval period, the university has evolved tremendously, yet its core function remains the same: to be a place where young students find their role in the society as they acquire and produce knowledge. Evidence of these valuable customs are evident in a historical documents which are even today portrayed in the Uniseum or the University Library. Two of the most representative documents are the “Margarita philosophica” from Gregor Reisch and the “Statuta Collegii Sapientiae” from Johannes Kerer, both dating back to the late 15th century, and printed in Freiburg.

The Margarita philosophica was essentially one of the first academic encyclopedias in the world, describing the traditional knowledge back in the days of the seven liberal arts. The Statuta Collegii Sapientiae was a very colorful guide of university life back in the late Middle Ages, with all the dos and don'ts of the day applied to the student residents of Freiburg.

My proposal for the year 2030 is that the University of Freiburg acknowledges this rich tradition and further reinvigorates the Liberal Arts and Sciences. In my opinion, the University College Freiburg would be best suited to adapt these historical literary works with a perspective in the 21st century, thus not only invoking a sense of curiosity in the mind of the modern pupil, but also making it palatable and appropriate for the students, citizens, and scientists of today.

These two projects will bring awareness about the two historical titles and connect the past with the future. University of Freiburg is in a unique position to offer the world two sources of historical academic tradition and cater them to a modern and relevant audience; perhaps even touching challenges of the present such as climate change or political conflict.